



## Top Objections and Rebuttals

**Presenter: Jon Bartos – President, trustaff Solutions**

Jon Bartos is a premier writer, speaker and consultant on all aspects of personal performance, human capital and performance analytics. Jon is one of an elite group of executive recruiters who have billed over \$1 million annually. Within a 12-year period he has cashed in over \$11 million in personal production. The office has won over 17 international awards in the MRI Network, including International Billing Manager of the Year and Top 10 SC Office. Jon's passion for success continually drives him. Jon competes nationally in Masters Track and Field, winning the National Masters Pole Vault Champion title 4 times since 2004. His ultimate fulfillment however comes from mentoring and assisting others to reach their potential.

In this presentation, Jon shares how to address the top recruiting and marketing objections we will face as recruiters. We know that resistance is a natural part of the recruitment process – learn Jon's effective techniques to maneuvering through that resistance!

### Meeting, Week 1: “Top Objections and Rebuttals” by Jon Bartos

**If you are reviewing this episode with a team, watch through 17:42 and then pause to role play and script your responses to the following pieces of resistance.**

**Objection:** We don't use recruiters.

**Possible Response:** “Why is that? When are exceptions made to that policy?”

**Possible Response:** “Most would agree that most companies are between 50 and 66% of their hiring decisions prove to be false in the first 12 months. If you cannot afford to make a hiring mistake, that's when a professional search consultant is used. Is this one of those times?”

**Possible Response:** “I get that. How many people do you have on your internal hiring team?”  
(We will use 3 for this example)

“And do they specialize in (the type of position you specialize in – pharmacists for this example), or are they generalists?”

“Okay, so you have 3 people who are responsible for all of your hiring, and you have how many employees in your organization – (#)? So they are responsible for hiring not only the best pharmacists, but also the best people to clean the floors, the best chef for the hot lunch line, and the best nurse for the night shifts. You have 3 generalists working on (I would assume) over 10 different positions. Let's compare that to our team - my team has (# of) people and we have a network of (# of) pharmacists. Only pharmacists. We are specialists – that's it. We don't do anything else. You want a (other type of position)? I can't help you. But I can promise you that your 3 people filling 10 different types of positions doesn't have half the reach of my team filling only one. Does this approach sound different than what you're used to hearing about?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** We have no openings.

**Possible response:** “Why is that? I would have thought based on his/her track record, you may want to create a position for this individual – before your competitor does.”

**Possible response:** “With all due respect, (name), you’ve been in this business a long time and so have I. You and I both know that there is no such thing as a true hiring freeze. We all know that some hiring is done if a critical individual leaves the team, to replace low producing staff, or to infiltrate a new sector of the market that you currently don’t have market share. It just has to be for the right person. Looking at your current team and possible diversification strategies, what kind of individual would thaw out that hiring freeze – just temporarily?”

**Possible response:** “I didn’t expect you to. My business is predicated on the simple notion that the companies that have the best people are the ones that make the most money. These companies are always on the lookout for difficult to find talent. Is that true of you as well?”

(Wait for “yes”.)

Tell me what type of talent is traditionally hard to find?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** Send me a resume.

**Possible response:** “What interested you about the candidate?”

**Possible response:** “When someone asks to see a resume, it usually means that they aren’t yet sold on this candidate – they still have some hesitations or questions about him/her. Odds are, a resume isn’t going to clear anything up for you at all. Why don’t we do this – give me a time that works for you – a 10 minute time slot. I will have (candidate) call you and you can have a brief conversation about his/her background and experience. You will both go in to that conversation knowing that you aren’t on the hook for any further conversations – unless both of you agrees. 10 minutes – that’s less than we’ve spent on this call. What time works for you?”

**Possible response:** “One of two things usually happens when someone tells me that. It’s either (A) – I didn’t do a good enough job presenting myself and my services, and you are just trying to find a way to get me off the phone. If that’s the case, I appreciate your honesty. Obviously I didn’t do a good enough job in my presentation to spark any interest in talking with me further. If that’s not the case, then it’s (B) – you just want to see the resume – which gives you the information equivalent to someone filling out a job application. Understand that I spend hours on the phone with the candidates that you are asking me to send the resumes of, and I can give invaluable insight about their backgrounds, strengths, and weaknesses...and talked with the people that they’ve worked with on these projects who will give you even better info sometimes than the interview itself. Bottom line, is that I need to give you info that you aren’t going to get from a resume – I’d rather talk to you about the person because if you are just paying me to send a resume, I think you’ll pay me way too much for that type of a service. Are you in a spot where I can give you some insight as to why I specifically picked up the phone and called **you** today?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** You need to call Human Resources.

**Possible Response:** “You and I both know that with the level of candidates we are pursuing, that I need a much stronger connection than only with HR. How would you feel if I called you about a potential career change and the only information I could give was from the HR department?”

**Possible Response:** “Okay, what’s the name of the person in HR that I should call?” (Get name)  
“Perfect. I don’t have time to call (name) today, but I have an opening at (time) tomorrow. What I want you to do is let her know when to expect my call. Why don’t you drop her an email and let her know to expect my call right at around (time) tomorrow. I’ll follow up with you and copy you on any communication that she and I have. Can you send her an email?”

**Possible Response:** “More than happy to work in conjunction with HR. I think they are very valuable but I also think they can get in the way. Because you are the hiring authority, I want to be in tune with your needs – not HR’s. When I get you candidates and when you interview them, I have to have feedback from you, because ultimately HR doesn’t really give me what I need to land the right candidate. Think of it this way – do you like golf? If I was going to buy you a set of golf clubs as a gift, would you rather I spend some quality time getting to know what kind of clubs you like, or would you trust your wife’s interpretation of what clubs are best for you? If I’m not in tune with you, I’m probably not going to be able to find you what you need. Make sense?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** “Your fees are too high” or “we only pay %”.

**Possible Response:** “What would it be worth to get real “A” players in – the top 10% that are hidden to job boards and postings? The kind you have to dig to find and deliver a strong employer value proposition to get them to take a look at another opportunity? Those are the people who are game-changers at your company, and those are the ones we go out and find on your behalf. What IS that worth to you?”

**Possible Response:** “I have no doubt that there are other firms who will charge you less – there is always someone in the market who is cheaper. Let me ask you this – think of your competitors – is there someone who has a reputation for being the cheapest in the industry?” (Pause, even insert the names of a few firms if you can assume who they will reference) “So if you were in a sales presentation going up against that firm, what would you say to position yourself above your competition? Just like your firm, we have never won business because we were the cheapest and we’ve never lost business because we were priced out of the market. Although it’s appropriate for (name of their competitors) to position themselves solely on price, we aren’t in that same category. Ultimately you pay nothing until you find a candidate who is worth paying our fee for. Are you open to paying nothing to get us started?”

**Possible Response:** “I would assume that when you say ‘too high’, it’s because another firm has signed an agreement with you at a lower percent. Is that fair?” (Pause) “And when you signed that agreement, did they start at a higher percent and you worked them down?” (Pause) “Let me ask you this. Do you think it’s possible that that recruiter has clients who pay the full fee that they initially quoted you on the phone? If they do, and they will make 20% if they send you the candidate and 35% if they send it to their other clients, who do you think is seeing those candidates first?” (Pause) “I know nobody wants to think that way, and probably not many other recruiters would point this fact out because of course it makes us look bad – which we aren’t, because if you were selling your home tomorrow of course you would take the highest offer. But what I am not interested in doing is having to compromise my search process and my integrity by having to provide value to clients in a graduated scale system. Does that make sense?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** We are using job boards, postings, or internal resources.

**Possible Response:** “I’m sure you probably can fill just about any position yourself, given enough time and effort. However, how much more profitable would your time be if you used that time to look into technology, mentor one of your junior managers, growing your business or pursue new clients and business ventures? My point is, your core business is (type of work) and our core business is recruiting. The cost of YOU taking the time to fill this position is much greater than if WE were to perform the task. Think about it – if you don’t like the candidates we put in front of you, you don’t hire them. But if you do – the value this superstar brings to your firm coupled with the man-hours we’ve just saved you are FAR greater than the fee you’ve paid. Are you open to comparing my candidates to yours, if it costs you nothing to compare?”

**Possible Response:** “That’s fine with me – in fact, I would do the same thing if I were you. Most all of my clients keep active postings on job boards, just to benchmark my candidates against theirs. However, this avenue typically only produces unhappy or unsuccessful employees that a competitor disregarded. I’d simply ask you this - let me do what I do best. Tell me one specific company, or couple of companies, that are your direct competition. If I recruit a top performer from one of those firms, someone who is not actively looking and therefore not responding to your original method of recruitment, will you speak to him/her? (If yes), what does his/her background look like?”

**Possible Response:** “Let me ask you something – the main product that you guys sell is (product). If your firm relied on ads on the internet to sell (product), what do you think your total sales would be? Anywhere near what it is with an outbound sales department on staff? We are your outbound sales department. It’s perfectly acceptable to gather up the gravy of those extra sales that are incoming – but you and I both know that the large accounts, the whales, the difference makers – they aren’t going to be landed with an inbound phone call. If outbound is how you sustain your business, why wouldn’t you use the same approach to sustain your talent?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** I'm happy – not interested – not looking!

**Possible Response:** “I understand that – and actually, the only people I recruit are the ones who want to be recruited. So if that’s not you – no problem. What I am doing is giving you the opportunity to gain insight and learn about your market from someone who speaks with your competitors all day long. The risk is that we spend 15 minutes together, and nothing comes from it directly or even indirectly. The reward is that, possibly either now or in the future, that investment of time results in a profoundly positive life changing experience. If, at the end of this call, you haven’t felt it was a good use of your time, tell me and I won’t call you again. That said, would you prefer to talk this evening or can you speak confidentially from your office?”

**Possible Response:** “That’s awesome to hear. Happy as in you just got back from your week-long all expenses paid vacation on your private yacht that your CEO bought you because you are so valued there, or happy like I’m not the first recruiter to call you this week and you are in the middle of something and don’t have time to talk?”

**Possible Response:** “I’m glad to hear that, and don’t get me wrong. I didn’t pick up the phone and call you because I thought you were wearing an “I hate (Current Company) T-shirt under your polo. Every person I have placed this year was currently employed when I called them, and told me they were happy just like you when I first talked to them. Ultimately, though, they saw an opportunity that would enhance their career, provide them with something they didn’t currently have, and was able to make a significant impact on them personally. Sometimes it takes a few months before the right opportunity comes up, sometimes it’s a few years. However they were smart enough to share with me some details about themselves and allow me the opportunity to be their eyes and ears in the marketplace. Is that something you’d allow me to do for you as well?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** I don't know anyone who is looking.

**Possible Response:** “In most cases – people don’t broadcast that they are looking – for fear – which is why I network with everyone confidentially. What about people you worked with previously? Who else could I network with – people who know people?”

**Possible Response:** “The others on your team – where did they work prior to joining your firm? Who on your team could I talk with to see if they have any contacts at their old companies that I might call?”

**Possible Response:** “I know you used to work at (name of previous company) – I was referred to (name of candidate) who I think you may have worked with when you were there. What’s your take on (candidate) – do you think he’d have the right background to fit the role we just discussed?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** I don't feel comfortable giving out names.

**Possible Response:** "Let me assure you, I treat all my candidates and clients on a confidential basis. It would be best for me to talk directly to potential prospects to relay the information that they will want to know about."

**Possible Response:** "Are you saying there is someone you have in mind for this opportunity, or you are saying that in general you don't like referring people to prospective opportunities?"

**Possible Response:** "Why is that?"

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** What's the compensation?

**Possible Response:** "I certainly understand that compensation is one of the important factors to consider when possibly moving forward, and I'm glad that you brought it up. However, what I'm assuming is also important is knowing the long term opportunity, meeting the people you'd actually be working with, and getting a feel for the culture of the company. Is that accurate? Okay, then let's back up and discuss those first – because if those factors don't offer you a significant opportunity above and beyond where you are right now, there's no point in even talking about compensation."

**Possible Response:** "Let me ask you – are you asking because you want to know what the current market value is for someone who like this, or are you asking because this opportunity is of interest to you, and you want to make sure you aren't priced out of their range?"

**Possible Response:** "Their commission structure is more competitive than most I've seen in my years of recruiting in this space. However, I want to hold off on that part of the conversation, because in my opinion it needs to be the icing on the cake – not the cake itself. Let me share with you their story – why they are hiring for this role, where the company is going, and what that would mean for you. If all that is intriguing, then we can talk commission – which in my opinion, is the icing."

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** Who is the company?

**Possible Response:** "I absolutely can identify with your desire to learn the name of my client. Please recognize this is a confidential search for reasons we can discuss at the appropriate time. For now, Human Resources has asked me to discreetly identify highly qualified candidates and explore possible mutual interest. Are there any companies that you would specifically want to avoid?"



**Possible Response:** “That is a very valid question. I hope you can appreciate that I’m tasked with the challenge of identifying and qualifying high caliber candidates that meet my client’s specific educational, experience and intangible qualifications of the position, prior to disclosing their name and location. While I recognize the fundamental nature of a confidential search can cause pause for some individuals - should you be somewhat intrigued - please be patient with our process. Just I am protecting the confidentiality of my client until the appropriate time, I will absolutely do the same for you as a candidate.”

**Possible Response:** “In most circumstances, clients hire me to tell their complete story in the market; there’s a tremendous amount of “free press” that comes from me talking with fourteen other people having a similar background to yours each day. However, in this specific situation due to circumstances I can share with you when there’s interest on your end to pursue further, I need to keep their name confidential. I can certainly understand your situation, but hope that you can also understand mine. What other information would you need to have so that we could continue forward until the time that I’m able to disclose the name of my client?”

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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If you are watching this video in two parts, break at this time.

## Meeting, Week 2: “Top Objections and Rebuttals” by Jon Bartos

**If you are reviewing this episode with a team, resume at 17:43 and watch through the end of the Episode. Role play and script your responses to the following pieces of resistance. Use Jon’s suggestions to create your own scripts for handling the objections discussed.**

**Objection:** Why should I use you exclusively?

**Possible Response:** “If you use multiple recruiters, it becomes a race. Initially you will have lots of candidates, but the incoming referrals will dry up. If you really need to make the best hire possible, you need to have an organization who will go in and dig deep to your competition and actually sell them to come to your organization. By doing this, you’ll have the ability to make the best hire from the entire candidate pool – not just the first and easiest round available.”

**Possible Response:** “When a client has concerns about exclusivity, it usually boils down to a concern that I won’t work diligently enough to cover the market thoroughly on their behalf. So before I answer that, let me make sure that I’m answering your true question – are you worried that I’ll stop when the ‘going gets tough’ and move on to an easier search?”

That’s a valid concern, one that you engaging us in a retained/exclusive relationship actually solves for you, because I am on the hook to get this position filled for you no matter how tough it gets. If you’d like us to provide you with status updates on a weekly basis so you feel comfortable that work is being done consistently on your behalf, I’d love to provide that for you. In fact, it’s something that I typically do for my retained clients. On a weekly basis, I’ll give you a summary of how many candidates were spoken with on your behalf, the companies that they were with, and their reason for either being interested or for not. This will allow us to work together to either adjust the parameters of our search, adjust the job specifications, or adjust my presentation completely. Would that resolve your concern?”



**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** I need to think about the offer over the weekend.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** I really need closer to (dollar amount) in order to make a move now.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** Lack of interest – I'm a 7 on a scale of 1-10.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** I've got multiple job opportunities, and I have to wait to see what these are.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** We use one search firm exclusively, and they are doing a great job.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Objection:** We are using another firm on a retained basis.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** I'm currently working with another recruiter.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** I need to consult with my spouse.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Objection:** The cost of living is too high.

**Your Scripted Response:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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